(c) the action proposed to improve the working conditions in order to utilise fully the funds earmarked for welfare of SCs/STs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) and (b) The Special Component Plan forms a part of State Plan and hence the States/UTs make provision for it in their Annual Plan. The Central Government however, provides an additive to it in the form of Special Centre Assistance.

(c) Expenditure under SCP is periodically reviewed and monitored with States/UTs and they are advised to optimally utilise expenditure under SCP.

Value of Exports and Imports

*119. SHRI S. AGNIRAJ: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total value of exports, so far, in 1999-2000; product-wise;

(b) the total value of imports during the same period;

(c) the steps being taken to improve the balance of payment position;

(d) whether it is a fact that because of quantitative restrictions exports are getting affected; and

(e) if so, the steps taken to improve the same?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) As per the latest DGCI&S data, the value of exports has been provisionally estimated at US $ 20757 million for the period April—October, 1999-2000.

Major Product-wise data available for April—August, 1999-2000 (provisional estimates) in US $ million is as follows:

Product Groups	Value
Plantation	333
Agri.& allied products	1389

Product Groups	Value
Marine Product	423
Ores and minerals	315
Leather & manufactures	616
Gems & jewellery	2594
Sports goods	31
Chemicals and related products	1807
Engineering goods	1649
Electronic goods	203
Textiles	3649
Handicrafts (excluding carpets)	272
Carpets	225

(b) The value of imports for the period April—October, 1999 has been estimated at US $ 26553 million.

(c) The steps to improve the balance of payment position include initiative for attaining a high growth of exports. The process of liberalisation has been carried forward with the changes introduced in the Exim Policy 1997—2002 and the focus is on improving the export competitiveness and minimising the transaction costs and delay faced by exporters. Services exports have been brought in the ambit of Exim Policy.

(d) and (e) India maintains Quantitative Restrictions on very few items of exports primarily on account of domestic requirement or on account of ecological and environmental considerations. The quantitative restrictions on imports are by and large on consumer or finished products. Hence, these quantitative restrictions do not adversely affect our exports. However, for exports all restricted items can be imported under the scheme of advance licence.